



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**September 10, 2008**

**DAVID GEBHARD PUBLIC MEETING ROOM, 630 GARDEN STREET**

---

---

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hochman called the meeting to order at 5:36pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Committee members present: Chair Hochman, Michael Jordan, George Weber, Daniel Wilson

Committee members absent: Lee Moldaver, Roger Schlueter

Liaison members present: Park and Recreation Commissioner Beebe Longstreet, Councilmember Iya Falcone

Liaison members absent: Planning Commissioner John Jostes

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Creeks Supervisor George Johnson, Creeks Program Assistant Liz Smith, Finance Director Bob Pierson

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Weber to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 13, 2008.

Vote:

Voice vote 3/0; Wilson abstained.

**AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one wished to speak.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Benson reported that Creek Week will take place October 2<sup>nd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>, and will include planting days, beach clean-ups, forums, and many opportunities for community members to get involved. Details are available online at [www.sbcreeks.com](http://www.sbcreeks.com).

**Ms. Longstreet arrived at 5:38pm.**

Mr. Benson reported that Mr. Moldaver attended the Planning Commission meeting and spoke on behalf of the Committee regarding the Plan Santa Barbara General Plan Update, and that Planning Commissioner Jostes thanked the Committee for their valuable input; that next Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, is the annual Creeks Division update to the Greater Santa Barbara Lodging & Restaurant Association at the Boathouse restaurant at Hendry's Beach; and, that on Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Granada Theatre, the Creeks Division will receive a Public Open Space award from Santa Barbara Beautiful for the Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration Project.

Mr. Benson noted that Mr. Moldaver asked him to acknowledge and thank Creeks Division Summer Intern Eirin Bareis, as well as Youth Apprentice Program participants Juan Maldonado, David Campoverde, and Jacob Perez.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **9. Measure G**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive an update on Measure G – November 2008  
Utility Users Tax Ballot Measure.

Documents:

Staff Report – September 2008  
Power Point Presentation – September 2008

Speakers:

Bob Pierson, Finance Director

**Ms. Falcone arrived at 5:45pm.**

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Pierson noted that the City does not tax internet access according to a Federal law which expires in 2014. City Council has directed staff to not tax internet access regardless of Federal law in the future.

Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

**RECESS at 5:42pm.**

**RECONVENED at 6:13pm at site visit location.**

**10. Site Visit - Technical Assistance Program (Creek Tree Program and Business Assistance Program) Update**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a presentation and discuss the pilot Creek Tree Program and Business Assistance Program during a site visit to a potential creek tree planting project, and recommend that staff proceed with implementation of both programs.

Site Visit Location:

Housing Authority Property, 219 Sycamore Lane, adjacent to Sycamore Creek.

Documents:

Staff Report – August 2008

Speakers:

George Johnson, Creeks Supervisor

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members asked questions regarding how equipment will be purchased for the Business Assistance Program; and, whether there is a penalty for a business that does not use the equipment or fails inspection.

Mr. Benson reported that staff would order and deliver equipment to participating businesses and ensure proper installation; and, that language will be included in the contract to ensure that businesses use the product.

Mr. Hochman suggested opening the program to the hotel and lodging industry.

Mr. Benson noted that the next industry the program will focus on will likely be mobile businesses, but that many hotels have restaurants that are eligible for the current program.

Committee members asked questions regarding fiscal limits of the Business Assistance Program; and, who will be implementing the program.

Mr. Johnson reported that there is no specified funding cap, but that depending on community interest, staff expects to spend up to \$25,000 within Fiscal Year 2009 on the Business Assistance Program; that there is currently \$225,000 in the Capital budget for the Technical Assistance Program; and, that Creeks enforcement staff will be implementing the program.

Motion:

Committee members Jordan/Weber move to implement the Business Assistance Program as listed in the staff report; and, incorporating comments on the budget and contract language.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote.

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Hochman noted that the Technical Assistance Program is not limited to the Business Assistance Program and Creek Tree Program, and that additional components are possible in the future.

Mr. Johnson noted that most creeks within the City are privately owned, and that staff intends to work with property owners on the Creek Tree Program to meet the goals of the Creeks Division to improve riparian habitat.

Committee members asked questions regarding the cost of a tree; and, what sort of site preparation will take place prior to planting trees.

Mr. Johnson reported that the cost per tree will vary, and that because of economies of scale, on a \$5,000 site staff may be able to install 50 trees, while on a \$1,000 site staff may install only five to six trees; and, that sufficient site preparation will be done to allow new trees to survive, as determined on a site-by-site basis.

Mr. Johnson noted that the property owner will agree to maintain, water, and weed new trees for five years, and allow for yearly Creeks Division inspections; and, that the primary goal is riparian habitat improvement, not bank stabilization or water quality improvement. Mr. Johnson also noted that properties must be owner occupied or owner maintained, and that staff will begin outreach efforts in the upper watersheds with larger property owners, but that all creek side properties within the City are potentially eligible to participate.

Mr. Benson noted that if a certain percentage of the trees die, the owner must refund a portion of the Creeks Division funds, which will help to encourage proper maintenance.

Committee members asked whether the owners will collaborate on site design; whether the agreement has been approved by the City Attorney; whether care of the tree will be a condition of sale to a future property owner; whether permitting and review will be required; whether this program will coordinate with the Invasive Plant Removal program; and,

whether the Housing Authority staff will maintain the potential project at the site visit location.

Mr. Benson reported that Creeks staff will hire contractors to plant trees and install irrigation, and both the property owner and Creeks staff must agree on site design; that the City Attorney has been very involved in scoping the project, but that the actual agreement has not been finalized yet; that it may be possible to require future property owners to care for the trees; that permitting and review will not be required; and, that collaboration is possible between the Creek Tree and Invasive Plant Removal Programs.

Committee members asked questions regarding the City's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy; and, looking at additional problems on sites.

Mr. Benson reported that a member of the IPM Committee has contacted staff, and that the Creek Tree Program is a great opportunity for pesticide education; and, that the goals of the Program are to build positive relationships with property owners and improve riparian habitat, rather than investigation and code enforcement.

**Ms. Falcone left at 7:20pm.**

Committee members asked questions regarding how many properties the program will begin with; legal concerns with providing advice to owners; and, how staff will ensure property owners are able to maintain the plants.

Mr. Johnson reported that staff plans to begin outreach to approximately 20 property owners in the upper watersheds via letters or phone calls, and contact people who have approached staff in the past for help; and, that each site will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Mr. Benson reported that because professional landscape contractors will be installing the plants, it will be easier to ensure that it's done correctly; and, that owners will be required to maintain plants.

Committee members asked questions regarding purchasing trees and supplies; how to best split the cost of the projects between property owner and the Creeks Division; and, whether low income property owners or scholarships have been considered.

Mr. Johnson reported that irrigation supplies bought in bulk will save funds, and that staff will likely buy a large amount of trees initially, and keep them at the City's Native Plant Nursery until needed; and, that the project's first \$1,000 cost is "free", with additional costs up to \$5,000 split 75% City and 25% property owner.

Mr. Benson reported that low income property owners would still be able to receive \$1,000 at no cost to the owner.

Committee members asked questions regarding how trees planted now will affect potential future restorations; and, whether there should be a funding cap on each property.

Mr. Johnson reported that trees will be planted on the upper banks rather than down in the creeks to prevent conflicts with future projects, but that it is difficult to predict future restoration projects with 100% accuracy.

Mr. Benson reported that this is a pilot program, and that the funding cap helps ensure the responsible use of Measure B funds. and to not let a property owner take advantage of the program.

**Motion:**

Committee members Weber/Hochman to implement the Creek Tree Program; including the change in funding providing the first \$1,000 free, then \$3,000 paid by the City and \$1,000 paid by the owner, up to \$5,000; including IPM education; with reports to the Committee every six months for the first 18 months; and, the option to revisit the Program.

**Vote:**

Voice vote 3/1 (Jordan opposed).

**Public Comment:**

No one wished to speak.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:**

Committee members Jordan/Weber to adjourn.

Mr. Moldaver adjourned the meeting at 7:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Benson  
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager